1: Tocantins--30 C-6 (1875) 1877 SQ13 Munduruca SQ13

time. Many other peoples, if not all, have afforded posterity the sad spectacle of this aberration of human reason.

The Munduruca hold fast to this fatal error: the sorcerer among them is irrevocably sentenced to death, but this is the only instance when capital punishment is applied.

The missionary from Bacabal, Fe. Pelino de Castrovalva, relates the following case in the Report he submitted to the President of Pará on the fourteenth of August, 1876:

"First of all, Your Excellency must know that one of my greatest concerns, during my five years of office in this Mission, has been to blot out from the Indians' heads some stubborn superstitions, especially those which stood most directly opposed to religion and to the well-being of society.

"Now, one of the strongest superstitions I had to battle was that of witchcraft.

"All I did not say, all I did not do, to wrench from their hearts this evil superstition! And how many deaths were not caused by those mistaken beliefs before the Mission was founded! However, when I already believed that I had persuaded them to loathe this abominable sin, lo and behold [108] one day when the missionary was not there they reverted to the same practices.

"Your Excellency is aware that last year I came to the capital [of Pará] to attend to some affairs of the Mission. Well, while I was away, several people in the Mission sickened and died.

"And some of the Indians began to cry: 'It is witchcraft! It is witchcraft!'

"We must kill the sorcerers. They want to kill us all: we must kill them! They selected four young men of the Mission to be sacrificed as sorcerers. They were able to find one of them, by the name of Ismael; the others, warned in time, fled and came back to the Mission after my return.

"The young man was killed with two gunshots, and finished off with blows on the head.

"The executioners were Silvano da Silva and another boy (now dead).

"The commander was Capt. José da Gama who, around noon of the day when he gave orders to kill Ismael (who lived on

the other side of the Mission, across the stream, in the midst of the woods), seeing that the envoys he had dispatched at dawn did not return, said impatiently: "These people are no good at killing people. I'll go myself!" But when he got there he found the victim already sacrificed. They returned satisfied, leaving the body to the vultures, without giving it burial."

This Capt. José da Gama, mentioned by the missionary father, had been the chief of a village which formerly stood on the banks of the Tapajos and came with all his people to the Mission of Bacabal. His aboriginal name is Mari-Baxi; the missionary father always left him in charge of the Mission when he had to leave for any period of time. He is an energetic and bold Indian, and already before the Mission was founded he sacrificed several of his companions who had been accused of witchcraft, among them his own brother whom [109] he cast down the waterfalls with a stone tied to his neck.

If Mari-Baxi, alias José da Gama, still commits such acts in a mission which is under government supervision, we can imagine what the chiefs of the central villages may do. The above episode took place in 1875, while I was traveling beyond the Mission of Bacabal, visiting the plains villages. Upon my return I stayed two days at the Mission, where José da Gama was in charge during the absence of the missionary who had gone to the capital.

The chief greeted me with numerous tokens of regard and friendship, but said not a word about the crime he had just committed. He, as well as his accomplices, preserved the greatest secrecy on the subject. Even the missionary, who returned a few days after my stay at the Mission, only came to know the facts much later.

Around that time, the following episode also took place in one of the villages. Several Indian women went bathing in a brook near the village; upon returning, each carried on her head a gourd of water for her household. When they least expected it, four Mundurucu came out toward them, got hold of one of the poor girls who was about eighteen years old, and pierced her with their tremendous spears. Her companions tarried a moment and

involuntarily glanced at the lamentable sight; but the executioners told them: "Keep going, she is a witch."

The body of the girl remained lying on the path all day. On the morrow they threw it on a fire and reduced it to ashes.

Another episode: On the bank of the Tapajoz, [110] in the house of a frontiersman, lives a Mundurucu girl, all painted, and about twenty years old; she is pagan, but owns the Christian name of Sebastiana; she already speaks a little Portuguese and she is very outgoing. She says that her family used to live in the village of Curucupi. Some dangerous fevers came to rage there, and several people died.

It so happened that her mother took it upon herself to treat some of the sick.

One day, as the old Indian woman returned from her work in the fields, an intimate friend of hers told her in secrecy: "Look out; your patient died; it is already rumored that you are a witch." Without losing time, the woman makes a decision with her husband's agreement. They leave the village the same night, taking with them two young daughters and a young son. And indeed, while they fled, the barking of the executioners' dogs followed them all through the night and the following day.

This poor family, after several days of steady marching through the forest, finally came out onto the banks of the Tapajoz and never returned to Curucupi or to any other maloca.

Sebastiana says that the prime mover of the plot aiming at her mother's death now lives in the Mission of Bacabal.

This same girl told me of another case, no less sad, which occurred at the time of the same outbreak of fevers. A few days before the family's flight, this girl and a few others had arrived in Acupari from a neighboring village. That afternoon, they still ate together on the grounds of the house. Around dawn, however, she was rudely awakened by a scream of despair and agony which rose nearby. Immediately afterwards two Mundurucu passed by her hammock, nearly dragging behind them [111] the body of her companion, into whose breast they had thrust the sharp blade of a spear; they had rounded off this horrendous sacrifice by strangling the unfortunate victim in her own hammock. The body,

683 nude and bloody, was found in the middle of the grounds at daybreak, and there remained exposed until evening. All passed by it in silence and without a complaint.

There are many other such cases, for unfortunately executions on account of witchcraft are still frequent. It is said that in those times when Caru-Sacaebê lived among the Munduruca, there existed no witchcraft and no sorcerers.

Indeed, the criminal code of the Munduruca is based exclusively upon this.

There is no record of one Munduruca ever being killed by another except on account of witchcraft. When violent hatred erupts between two Indians who inhabit the same village -- and this is extremely rare -- one of the two merely takes down his hammock, goes to some other village which attracts his fancy, chooses a place in the ehcá, and remains there as long as he pleases.

XVI

Social feelings among the Munduruca -- The family -- The characteristic painting pattern of the tribe.

A remarkably strong social spirit, or indeed national spirit, binds the individual members and the villages of this tribe, preserving, if I may say so, the autonomy of the Munduruca republic in a wilderness which lies beyond the contact and influence of our civilization. [112]

It is no cause for wonder that the Quechua of the Andes, herding as they did vast flocks of llama and alpaca and cultivating in large quantities the potato native to their mountains, should have founded great population centers and established a powerful monarchy. An agricultural and pastoral people, they possessed those elements necessary to live in the midst of plenty and to develop their intellectual and moral qualities under the stimulus of life in society.

4: Horton E-4 (no date) 1948
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In another dance the peccaries are pursued by hunters and their dogs. The peccaries take refuge in a hole in the ground. The hunters then simulate the construction of a trap by standing with legs astraddle to represent an alley of stakes; the peccaries try to escape between the lines of stakes and are killed by a hunter at the end of the alley.

An abbreviated description of a peccary festival is given by Strömer (1932). This is a hunting ceremony in which the skulls of animals play a role. Sexual intercourse is performed ritually by the participants. At one point in the ceremony, the performers dance on a heap of peccary hair while they sing an invocation of success in peccary hunting.

At a special men's festival in honor of the ab ancestors the sacred trumpets are blown. At the conclusion of the ceremony, a special beverage is poured through the trumpet into a cup and drunk by the participants. The ceremony, performed by men alone since women are not permitted to see the trumpets, is said to propitiate the ab ancestors and to obtain their good will toward their descendants.

At the tree festival a tree is set up in the center of the dwelling house; the participants stand around it while the shaman smokes tobacco and invokes on the house the protection of Karusakaibö, the creator god.

SHAMANISM AND SORCERY

The shaman determines the most favorable time for war parties, exorcises evil spirits, takes a leading part in ceremonies, cures the sick, detects sorcerers, and intervenes to terminate eclipses of the sun. Illness is believed to be caused by the intrusion of a worm into the patient's body, or by sorcery. The shaman cures the intrusion by blowing smoke on the patient's body and sucking out the worm. When many deaths or much sickness occur the malevolence of a sorcerer is suspected; the shaman detects the sorcerer and informs the chief of his identity. The chief appoints two warriors to follow the sorcerer until they have a favorable opportunity to kill him. Some hints as to the technique of sorcery are given in Strömer's vocabulary. He records the word, yamain, meaning "to cut off the head and set it back again," and the word, yakut, "hole in the earth in which to bury the head"—both with reference to the practice of sorcery.

Sorcery is said to be virtually the sole cause of homicide among the *Munduruci*. Adultery is punished by the expulsion of the guilty persons. When two men become antagonistic, one of them takes his hammock and goes to live in the men's house of another village.

MYTHOLOGY

The creator god and culture hero of *Munduruci* mythology is Karusakaibö (Caro-Sacaibé (Taunay, 1877)); Karusakaibe (Kruse, 1934);

12:Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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571 578 629 the same men's house, or even the same household. Correspondingly, if a man is to side with his co-residents, he may find himself arrayed against his patrilineal kinsmen in another household or village. Mundurucú men have two primary sets of bonds, one based on co-residence and the other on patrilineal kinship. Since the persons affected in each set are generally not the same, the individual is placed in potential role conflict, if sides are to be chosen. To choose the tie of kinship may disrupt the village and household and their economies; to give primary loyalty to one's co-residents can destroy clanship.

There can be no balance of antagonisms in Mundurucú society; conflict can only destroy both social solidarity and social integration. Hostility is, for this reason, suppressed. Intervillage conflicts are unheard of, as are those between kin groups. And interpersonal grievances remain latent between individuals not only because of the disruptive effect of an open breach, but because the antagonists cannot expect uniform support from either kinsmen or co-residents. Covert factionalism may be rife among the Mundurucú, but open feud is impossible within their social system.

578 There are few means to express the aggression arising from the frustrations of normal social life. Real grievances, such as those arising from sexual rivalries or from the institution of chieftainship, do not result in direct retaliation against the objects of hostility. Aggression is instead buried and later displaced on surrogates. During the nineteenth century, the Mundurucú were able to use warfare as a displacement device and as a rallying point for social cohesion. The only acceptable means of purging latent hostility today is the projection of generalized antagonisms to the shamans and their execution as sorcerers.

• [683] Although matrilocality is no longer as rigidly adhered

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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754 [683] The shaman is said by the Mundurucú to be "angry at everybody," and he continues his practice until apprehended and executed.

The sorcerer is thus visualized as the bearer of latent and generalized aggression that is expressed by covert means, and it is possible to infer, from the beliefs surrounding the institution, the projection and expurgation of repressed hostility within the society at large. Witchcraft has particular tenacity because it serves to provide the practitioner of the art with a means of aggression release, and it provides the members of the community with a technique for displacing their own hostilities to his person and deriving further catharsis through his execution. Witchcraft also serves to explain the ills that inflict humanity, and provides a means of defense against them. The problems resolved by belief in sorcery and shamanism are almost universal in scope—disease, death, and social tensions—and are not so narrowly keyed to the variables of Mundurucú society and economy as were the defunct ceremonies. The problem of repressed antagonism is especially acute among the Mundurucú, however, because of the injunction against the open display and playing out of hostility. [578]

683 754 Ideally, the execution of a sorcerer is carried out with the consensus of nearly all members of the community. Such agreement was probably more easily obtained in the past when political controls were firmer and less subject to dispute and the bonds of mutual interdependence among villagers stronger. Today, however, sorcery accusations frequently bring factionalism perilously near the surface. In one savannah community, the chief and one of his sons were slain as sorcerers, and in another only the intervention of the chief and his family saved his stepson from the same fate. That chiefs and their families are so com-

12:Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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monly entangled in sorcery cases, either as accused or accusers, reflects the strains in the political system. Reduced village size contributes to the disruptive effects of sorcery accusations, for even if a man has only a few defenders, this may constitute a significant bloc within the community under current circumstances.

One result of witch killings has been a decrease in the number of shamans. This not only includes people who were actually executed, but also those who escaped or who left for fear of future accusation. Given the inevitability of disease and death and the Mundurucú belief that sorcerers are the responsible agents, the position of the shamans is very insecure. There had been no sorcery killings in Cabruá for several years, as of the time of our stay, but illnesses and deaths had occurred. The step son of the chief was being effectively protected by his family, leaving two other shamans open to accusation. One decided to move to his rubber-avenue home on the Tropas River, and the other immediately followed suit rather than be faced with the unhappy prospect of being the only available scapegoat. Cabruá was then left without a practicing shaman, and the community was deprived of one of the services that village life traditionally afforded.

Changes in Mundurucú religion show a close relationship to economic and social shifts. Aspects of belief and practice that promoted and affirmed the well-being and values of the society at large and which were best staged by a unified social group have disappeared. What remains are essentially practices that are defensive against prevailing fears and anxieties and which are highly individualistic in practice. A circular process is at work here. The decline of group ceremonial not only reflects the weakening of Mundurucú social structure, but it has aided in its debilitation. Fellow clan members are no longer united by

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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them through its combined purchasing power and its members have access to them. The sharing of food also fortifies the ties of interdependence. A family does not go hungry unless everybody in the village is in similar straits, and the unlucky hunter, the traveler, or the family whose garden was ruined by armadillos or wild pigs may count on housemates or neighbors in other households for aid.

Within the household, the framework of social cohesion is provided by the core of related resident females. And although the men of the household are marginal participants in its internal workings, they identify themselves with its interests and occupants to an increasing degree, as their marital union grows in age and stability. But the men are also integrated on the level of the village through the men's house, which serves as political forum, social club, and center of a male religious cult. The men's house also is the place where members of the same moiety and, perhaps, of the same phratry associate. Bonds of kinship, which ultimately include all Mundurucú in a limited set of relationships, are important deterrents to any motivation to move into a more isolated existence.

The savannah villages appear to the observer as extremely well-knit and unified organizations; and the ease with which new residents or visitors are integrated into them is an impressive display of tribal solidarity. But such harmony is difficult to maintain. Hostilities may be repressed, but not indefinitely or completely. Mundurucú culture provides few escape valves for aggression. Warfare was formerly the ideal vent for latent hostility, and it had the dual advantage of affording an external outlet and requiring social solidarity by arraying the tribe against a common foe.

The lapse of warfare left only the execution of sorcerers

12:Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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182 578 754 683 as the single permissible occasion on which violence was condoned. Kluckhohn's* view is well founded that the sorcerer's practice and his execution are cathartic for him and the society, but it is still significant that aggression is released within the society and not outside. This would not disrupt a society that enjoyed other and stronger bases of solidarity, and it might well promote integration; but the result among the modern Mundurucú has been the intrusion of sorcery accusations into factional disputes and frequent failure to obtain agreement on executions. Thus, not only shamans but disaffected persons also leave village life.

182 578 [537] Conflicts between persons and groups are not always connected with witchcraft. The Mundurucú men commonly engage in clandestine escapades with the wives of others. The injured husband does not court open conflict against the adulterer, however, and resentments are generally well contained. Another cause of hostility is the [622] numerical and social strength of the chief's family and the question of the legitimacy of his succession. The only recourse left to dissident parties is to withdraw from the situation. They may go to another village, which was a common means of resolving the situation in the nineteenth century also, or they may move to permanent residence at their rubber avenue, which today happens more frequently. The choice of the latter alternative may end the tension, but the severance of social relations obviously disrupts integration, especially when it occurs frequently.

182 591 596 [578] Social tensions commonly cause people to leave their villages. Concomitantly, there has been a progressive weakening of the bonds that hold them. The diminished size of the extended family has made the matrilocality on which it is based more vulnerable to situational factors

*Kluckhohn, 1944.

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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occurred. If all the planned moves took place, however, the net loss to the village would be 36 out of 90 people, the residents of three of the ten occupied houses. As a footnote to this episode, Antonio fled shortly after our departure, but he made the fatal error of settling in a Mundurucú hamlet on the lower Cururú River. His reputation was, of course, widely known, and he was slain by his new fellow-villagers.

To our knowledge the dispute never flared into an open display of aggression. On a few occasions the accused man was seen to talk to one of the men who wished to kill him and, more rarely, there was mutual visiting. Hostility between Mundurucú is generally more open on the Cururú than in the savannahs, but violence is still suppressed. Here, too, the only escape valve consists in killing suspected sorcerers; otherwise, one may move away from the object of hostility. The latter is easily done in the socio-economic framework of the Cururú settlements, for interpersonal and interfamilial dependence is low, and individuals have correspondingly greater mobility than on the savannahs.

Although no personal violence attends these disputes, the facts of conflict and withdrawal are socially disruptive beyond their effects on village membership. In the above-described conflict, two brothers were ranged in opposite factions, because one had chosen to follow the stand in defense of the accused taken by the oldest member of his household. And the position of the latter placed him in conflict with one of his wife's brothers, who favored killing Antonio. An even more interesting split occurred in a household whose inhabitants were absent from the village during my research. The oldest man and head of the house wished to avoid strife by taking no action against the condemned man, but his son, who resided with the father, was

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made the tribe useful to the whites. It was important to the Brazilians to maintain the friendship and virtual autonomy of the Mundurucú; the group was accordingly spared some of the severe contact traumata experienced by other Indian tribes of the rain forest.

The social system resulting from the first set of changes in Mundurucú social structure of which we have record persists (with some further modifications) in the present-day savannah villages. From one point of view, it might be said that these early alterations had one over-all function: they fulfilled the new social need of accommodation to Brazilian society. Peaceable relations were established through mercenary service and trade in manioc flour, and these were the means through which the Mundurucú acquired trade items. But the fact of a system of interrelations between Brazilians and Mundurucú meant that the social system of the latter had become vulnerable to changes in the former. Thus, when the direction of the Amazonian economy turned to rubber extraction, the Mundurucú were accordingly affected.

The rubber boom was roughly concurrent with the general pacification of the middle Amazon region. The Mundurucú were needed then as workers, and not as warriors. For the most part they turned to rubber tapping to get merchandise. The total lapse of military activity undercut some of the bases of Mundurucú social solidarity and exposed the institution of leadership to the strife inherent in the political organization. Witchcraft and the execution of sorcerers continued—there are no data to indicate either an increase or decrease of the practices—but in a new social setting. The formerly prevailing consensus in executing sorcerers, which was a reflection of social solidarity, is now difficult to obtain, and the custom today disrupts cohesion.